

Nutrition Month

TIP OF THE DAY

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Pear-fect!

March 1, 2006

Want an easy taste adventure? Substitute ripe fresh or canned pears in any recipe that calls for apples: baked crisps, salads, even applesauce or baked apples. With a little citrus juice, fresh pears won't discolor.

Like apples, pears pack plenty of goodness. Peel on, a medium pear delivers just 100 calories and about 4 grams of dietary fiber. About half is cholesterol-lowering soluble fiber. They have some vitamin C and potassium, too. And their antioxidants, called catechins (a flavonoid), may help protect you from cancer.

Try pears in a spinach salad, a pear-cranberry smoothie or on a turkey sandwich.

Home Work—Eat Smart

March 2, 2006

Whether paid work or volunteer work, working at home offers easy kitchen access. Whether that's a benefit or a hazard to smart eating depends on you.

To eat smart as a home-office habit, set regular mealtimes rather than heading to the kitchen on a break. When you do need a break, "do" rather than eat: walk the dog, pick a flower bouquet, start a laundry load. Especially if you work alone, go out for an occasional lunch with a friend or a colleague. Enjoy the home-office advantage: take your afternoon break to put dinner in the oven or start a simmering pot of hearty stew.

Since you likely have no workplace deli or cafeteria to rely on:

- **Stock your kitchen for easy workday meals:** fruit, canned soups and stews, salad ingredients, whole-grain bread, lean deli meat and cheese, frozen microwave "bowls" and other prepared foods, milk, yogurt.
- **Plan ahead, then re-create last night's leftovers:** Heat leftover stir-fries, and wrap in a warm tortilla for a quick fajita. Microwave a baked potato; top with yesterday's stew or lentil soup. Slice leftover chicken to arrange on a freshly tossed salad.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

Eat Your Broccoli

March 3, 2006

Broccoli, bok choy, Brussels sprouts: what do they have in common? They're all cruciferous vegetables that begin with the letter *b*!

Cruciferous vegetables (named for their tiny cross-forming flower petals) belong to the cabbage family. The family portrait includes everything from arugula to watercress—with cauliflower, collards, kale, kohlrabi, mustard greens, radishes, rutabaga, Swiss chard and turnips in between.

Why so healthful? First their nutrients: beta carotene (which forms vitamin A), vitamin C and varying amounts of calcium, iron and folate. Second, cruciferous vegetables have a unique phytonutrient array that includes cancer-fighting indoles and isothiocyanates and fiber.

Plum Good

March 4, 2006

Prunes have a new name: dried plums! With it comes new data. Great-tasting dried plums offer more health benefits than just keeping your body regular.

Dried plums score high in antioxidants, plant substances that may help protect you from heart disease and some cancers. They're also good sources of fiber (soluble and insoluble)—3 grams in five dried plums. They supply minerals: boron, copper, iron, magnesium, potassium. And whether dried or fresh, their natural sorbitol is key to their laxative effect.

To cut fat from baked goods, substitute an equal amount of pureed plum for at least half the butter, margarine or oil.

Try a snack dip on sliced apples or whole-wheat crackers.

Cooks on the Move

March 5, 2006

Ever think of cooking as an active sport? TV chefs are in constant motion: chopping, stirring, whisking, scrubbing, lifting—physically multitasking!

Join the kitchen team whenever you can. It takes more muscle, more motion and more energy to prepare food from scratch than to simply pop a prepared meal into the microwave oven.

Join in some culinary athletics.

- **Knead a batch of homemade dough:** great for your arm and shoulder muscles.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

- **Whip egg whites, batter, and mashed potatoes by hand:** good for arm muscles.
- **Tromp through farmer's markets:** Walking and carrying bags of produce are good weight-bearing activities.
- **Pick tree fruit at a local grove:** great stretching, and hauling fruit to your car builds muscles.

Your Think Tank

March 6, 2006

Ever utter these words: "Where did I leave my keys?" or "I just forgot what I was going to say." Maybe you're tired or stressed—or maybe there's an eating connection.

For your brain to function, it needs fuel. Unlike muscles, your brain doesn't store glucose for energy production. Instead, it constantly draws on glucose in fluid surrounding your brain cells. This glucose comes from regular meals, with carbohydrates (in vegetables, fruits, legumes, and grain foods) as the best fuel source. Beyond that, adequate amounts of several B vitamins, vitamins C and E, iron and zinc are essential for normal brain function.

Can certain foods promote short-term memory? Healthful eating does that. Other food substances—in blueberries, strawberries, dried plums, fatty fish—are under study for their possible roles in short-term memory. Stay tuned!

Even before research offers more insight, think to eat, and eat to think.

- Eat smart. Enjoy blueberries, strawberries, dried plums and fatty fish, such as salmon. No matter what research ultimately says about their link to memory, they're good for you!
- Skip the urge to skip meals. You need to freshen your glucose supply, especially in the morning. Breakfast gives a healthful start to the day.
- Enough rest and plenty of physical activity helps, too.

Fig-ure This Out

March 7, 2006

What flower looks like a fruit and was enjoyed as training food and trophy by ancient Olympian athletes? Figs!

Figs are a terrific source of both *insoluble* and *soluble fiber*, aiding digestion and helping to lower cholesterol levels. What's more, they supply some *potassium*, *iron*, and *calcium*—more than other fruits.

And figs contain *polyphenol antioxidants*, with potentially health-promoting benefits. Harvest time is late summer to early fall—peak season for fresh figs.

Experiment with figs—fresh or dried—in your meals.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

- **Sweeten vegetables:** Add sliced figs to cooked sweet potatoes, green beans, roasted onions, or squash.
- **Make salads elegant:** Slice figs; toss with Caesar, Waldorf, slaw, or garden salad.
- **Make batter better:** Mix finely chopped figs into buttermilk pancake or muffin batter.
- **Flavor cooked grains:** Stir chopped figs into rice, couscous, or barley during cooking; for more flavor, add sautéed onions and herbs, too.

Shaking the Salt Habit

March 8, 2006

Need to watch your salt intake? Are you one of the 39 percent of Americans who have high-normal or high blood pressure? Since high-salt eating is linked to high blood pressure, you're smart to choose and prepare foods with less salt.

But what if you like salty tastes? Then try to retrain your taste buds. The less salt you eat, the less you'll want. After all, you weren't born loving salty tastes. You learned it, so you can unlearn it, too. Taste before you shake today; a dish may not need more salt.

If food needs a flavor lift:

- Pep it up with pepper. Chili peppers or hot pepper sauces come in different degrees of "hot."
- Add a splash of vinegar. Herbed, balsamic, wine, or rice vinegar give a flavor spark to sauces, soups, and salads.
- Use MSG for flavor with one-third the sodium in the same amount of salt.
- Shake on a salt-free herbal blend.

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Howdy, Partner!

March 9, 2006

Getting enough iron? If you're female, maybe not! Yet, to feel energized, your body needs enough iron to carry oxygen to body cells where energy is made.

To replace iron lost monthly in menstrual flow, women need more iron than men: 18 milligrams of iron daily for women (ages 19 to 50 years), compared to 8 milligrams for men. (After age 50 or so, women need 8 milligrams of iron daily, too.)

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

Where do you get iron? Among the best food sources are meat and poultry. Beans, eggs, and whole-grain and iron-enriched cereals, breads, and other grain products supply iron, too, but you'll need to partner them with a vitamin C-rich food or a little meat to maximize their absorption.

To boost iron benefits from food, enjoy:

- A citrus or a tomato garnish with quiche, an omelet, or a vegetarian dish.
- Chopped ham or smoked turkey to flavor bean chili, or rice and beans.
- Vitamin C-rich fruit or fruit juice with meatless meals. Try orange slices on a peanut butter sandwich or tomatoes with a rice-bean dish.
- Strawberries or melon on your breakfast cereal.

Let-tuce Keep You Healthy

March 10, 2006

Next to potatoes, lettuce is the most popular veggie in the United States. Which leafy greens go into your salads?

Dark-green leafy greens offer plenty of the antioxidant beta carotene (forms vitamin A), which may help protect you from cancer and may slow aging, and another antioxidant, vitamin C. The darker the leaves, the more nutrient-rich the lettuce. (Romaine has seven times more vitamin A and C than iceberg lettuce.) Some greens deliver folate, potassium, and fiber, too. Greens supply lutein, which contributes to good vision and may help protect your eyes from cataracts and macular degeneration. And leafy greens fill a plate with few calories and essentially no fat (except what's added with dressing).

Perk up your salad making—more flavor, color, texture—by mixing in different greens.

- For a peppery flavor: arugula or watercress
- For leaves that aren't green: red-and-white radicchio
- For flavor with a "bite": chicory or escarole
- For a mild flavor and delicate green color: mache or Boston or Bibb lettuce
- For a deep-green color: spinach
- For a crisp texture: Romaine

Garlic and Onions—Breath-taking Advice

March 11, 2006

Crisp, juicy onions; firm, smooth garlic cloves; long, fibrous leeks: great for flavor, bad for your breath, likely good for your heart.

What makes the onion family (onions, garlic, leeks, chives, scallions) so flavorful and so healthful is their *allyl sulfides*, one type of phytonutrient. According to today's research, these aromatic compounds may help to lower LDL – (bad) cholesterol, control blood pressure, prevent blood clotting (in blood vessels), act as antioxidants to reduce cancer risk, and perhaps promote immunity.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

Tip: for the health benefits, enjoy onions and garlic, not just garlic powder, onion salt, or garlic oil or pills. For garlic, you likely need at least one clove daily to make a difference.

If these pungent foods offend your nose or taste buds:

- **Rub odor away.** Wipe your hands with salt or lemon juice after handling.
- **Hold your tears.** Refrigerate onions before cutting them.
- **Lessen the flavor.** Pour boiling, then cold, water over raw onions. Or cook to mellow.
- **Freshen your breath.** Eat the parsley garnish. Or sip ginger or mint tea afterward.

“Soul” Food

March 12, 2006

What foods bring you comfort? Meatloaf and mashed potatoes? Pizza with the “works”? Mom’s lasagna? Likely some foods enjoyed during your youth conjure up warm, soothing feelings. There’s no specific list of comfort foods. We each have our own.

So, is indulging in comfort foods okay? Sure—if it doesn’t lead to emotional overeating, if you also deal with negative emotions positively and away from food, and if it isn’t all the time. If these foods are high fat, high calorie or low in nutrients, certainly go easy.

When you reach for comfort foods, enjoy them in moderation.

- Boost their value. Add vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and beans—easier if pizza, chili, spaghetti or many other mixed entrees are your comfort foods.
- Savor the comfort from small portions, especially if the food is high in calories or fat.
- Update comfort foods for nutrition and convenience. Perhaps substitute ground turkey in meatloaf, reduced-fat cheese in lasagna, refrigerated whole-wheat pizza crust topped with lots of veggies.

Stoke Your Appetite

March 13, 2006

Underweight? If so, you’re probably tired of hearing people say how lucky you are.

Being too thin can be risky to your health. You need the fat layer just under your skin to help protect you from cold and cushion your body from injury. That fat layer is a source of stored energy if you need it. If underweight comes from undereating, the chances of tiredness, irritability, lack of concentration and the risk of infection go up.

If you need to gain weight, do it smart. Eat plenty of nutrient-rich foods (but still without too much fat). Try frequent meals and snacks; drink beverages 30 minutes

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

before and after eating, not with meals (so they don't fill you up): and yes, fit in physical activity, which builds muscle and stimulates appetite.

If you have a poor appetite for any reason including illness, fatigue, stress, medication, or diseases if you're normal weight—try this to stimulate your appetite and make eating more appealing:

- Eat five or six smaller meals instead of three bigger ones during the day.
- Add more appeal to food with more color, more texture, more aroma in your meal.
- Eat with friends.
- Drink a small glass of wine or beer before eating.
- Slow down. If rushing takes your appetite away, plan stressful activities away from mealtime.
- Walk before mealtime.

Sorting It Out!

March 14, 2006

Based on what you've heard or read, should you avoid some foods entirely? Almost 60 percent of consumers have that misconception, according to a recent survey. Some say, "We hear more about what we *can't* eat than what we *can*." Confused?

Sorting through the never ending flow of nutrition information and misinformation isn't easy, especially when you're trying to make the best food choices for the whole family.

Before you let health and nutrition news make you feel like throwing all caution—and wisdom—to the wind:

- *Take the long view.* Make your food decisions on studies (plural!) from credible sources.
- *Listen to real experts.* Call a nutrition expert—perhaps in a university extension office, hospital, or public health agency—where you live. Get a referral to a local registered dietitian at www.eatright.org.
- *Get up close and personal.* Make sure "hot" news in health applies to your personal needs. If you're not sure, talk it over with your doctor or a registered dietitian.

Cranberries – Not Just for Holidays

March 15, 2006

Do cranberries conjure up thoughts of the holidays? Whether you drink cranberry juice, blend canned cranberries in smoothies, add cranberries to poultry or pork stuffing or enjoy cranberries in salsas, salads or side dishes, cranberries help keep you healthy any time of year. They're loaded with *vitamin C* and other *antioxidants*.

Their crimson color comes from a flavonoid that may help lower your LDL – (bad) cholesterol, help prevent blood clots that cause heart attacks and stroke—and so

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protect you from heart disease. Their other plant substances may protect you from cancers, gum disease and stomach ulcers.

Another better-known benefit: Substances in cranberries help prevent bacteria in the urinary tract from causing bladder infections.

De-Vine—The Benefits of Wine

March 16, 2006

Red or white? The time-honored rule—white wine with chicken or fish, red with meat—doesn't take into account a meal's layers of flavors or the distinctive flavor differences among red and white wines. Some wine experts say the right wine is a matter of personal taste anyway. After all, each person perceives flavor differently.

Drinking wine—either white or red—in moderate amounts may offer some heart-healthy benefits, perhaps boosting HDL- (good) cholesterol, helping prevent LDL- (bad) cholesterol from forming, or helping prevent blood platelets that cause heart attacks and strokes from clotting. Plant substances in grapes, such as resveratrol (flavonoid) and tannins, may contribute to these benefits. The alcohol may be a factor, too.

To get heart-healthy benefits from the vine:

- *Enjoy the wine you like*, but no more than one 5-ounce glass of wine daily for women; for men, it's two.
- *Drink grape juice*. If you don't drink wine, grape juice may offer some of the same heart-healthy benefits.

Time for an Oil Change

March 17, 2006

Ever think of olives as a fruit? Not sweet, but rich in healthful fats, olives are more than a savory ingredient and finger food.

Why so healthful? Compared with vegetable oils, olive oil has far more *monounsaturated fat* (the good kind). And it has a little saturated fat. That's the key—"monos" may lower total and LDL-(bad) cholesterol in blood and perhaps raise HDL-(good) cholesterol, while saturated fats raise both total and LDL-cholesterol. (The risk for heart disease goes up when total and LDL levels are higher and/or HDLs are lower.) Because it comes from plants, olive oil has no cholesterol.

Before you "chug" a jigger of olive oil, remember: It's not calorie free. A tablespoon of olive oil has 14 fat grams and 120 calories, slightly more than the same amount of butter or margarine.

For flavor and health benefits, toss salads with olive-oil vinaigrette.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

Come Clean

March 18, 2006

When fruits and vegetables are summer fresh, do you need to wash them, even if you peel away the skin and only eat the insides? Yes!

Washing removes debris and residue from the outside surfaces and crevices of produce. Cutting through unwashed produce can carry dirt or bacteria to the inside flesh.

To clean your fresh produce any time of year:

- Choose produce carefully. Reject any with decay, molds, insect holes, or surface cuts. Remove bruised or damaged spots that may harbor bacteria or mold.
- Use separate cutting boards – one for cleaning produce, another for raw meat, poultry, and fish. Color code the boards, or label them with a permanent marker. Use plastic boards; wooden cutting boards can harbor bacteria.
- Remove outer leaves on lettuce, cabbage, and other leafy vegetables. “Rust” spots on lettuce aren’t harmful.
- Wash produce with clean, running water just before eating. Unless made for cleaning produce, skip soap; it leaves residue. You don’t need a vegetable wash (made from baking soda and citric acid) either; if you do use it, rinse well.
- Scrub firm produce with a vegetable brush: melons, cucumbers, carrots, foods with edible peels.
- Store cleaned produce in clean containers or plastic storage bags.
- Keep your refrigerator produce drawer clean. Wash and sanitize it often.

Basically Barley

March 19, 2006

Good in soups and stews, hearty and healthful, barley’s got lots to offer.

Like other whole grains, barley supplies plenty of complex carbs, yet little fat. It’s also a good fiber source – soluble fiber to help lower blood cholesterol levels and reduce heart disease risk, and insoluble fiber to help your intestine work normally and perhaps help reduce colorectal cancer risk. Barley’s phytonutrients may have related benefits. Besides that, barley contains several B vitamins, selenium, iron, magnesium, and zinc.

Add pearl barley to tonight’s dinner.

- In meatballs. Cook barley according to package instructions. Then mix it with raw ground meat and other ingredients before shaping and cooking.
- In salad. Cook first, then substitute barley in salads that use cooked pasta or rice.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

Cut Trans Fats

March 20, 2006

Shopping for groceries this week? Go easy on foods with trans fatty acids, found in many processed foods.

What makes them unhealthy? Processing these plant-based fats has made them saturated. Trans fatty acids may boost harmful LDL-blood cholesterol levels, perhaps more than other saturated fats do, while lowering protective HDL-cholesterol.

How much trans fat is okay? The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) advises that you keep trans fatty acids as low as you can. They have no known health benefits.

How low can you go? Opting out completely isn't practical since they're in so many types of foods and some are naturally found in food. With an all-out ban you'd probably find it too hard to get the other nutrients you need.

Cut back on trans fats by knowing where they hide.

- Check ingredients on food labels for partially hydrogenated oils. Hydrogenation turns unsaturated vegetable fats into trans fats. Some foods with trans fats: margarine, cookies, frosting, snack cakes, pastry, pie crust. More and more foods list trans fats on Nutrition Facts.
- Look for food products labeled "trans fat free."
- Eat more of foods with few, if any, trans fats: fruit, vegetables, whole-grain foods, fish, lean meat and poultry nuts, and olive, canola, and safflower oils.

Going Bananas

March 21, 2006

Simple to enjoy, great to pack and carry, healthful to eat—bananas are among America's most popular fruits.

On average, American consumers eat about 84 bananas yearly! What's under the peel? Among other substances, *potassium*, which helps reduce the risk of high blood pressure and stroke; *vitamin C*, not only an immunity builder, but an antioxidant with health-protecting benefits, too; *fiber*, linked to reduced risk of cancer and heart disease; and more digestible *carbohydrates* than any other fruit has.

Grab a banana today.

Back to Our Roots

March 22, 2006

Root vegetables, that is, and tubers, too! Besides beets, carrots, potatoes, radishes and turnips, a lot of nourishing vegetables grow under the ground. Have you ever tried boniato, celeriac, jicama, malanga, salsify, sunchokes, taro or yucca?

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

All supply plenty of *complex carbs* and *fiber*, yet virtually no fat. With flavors that range from sweet to earthy, they offer a versatile and economical way to add nourishment and flavor to your plate. Cut and cook them in hearty soups and stews; use them in place of potatoes, perhaps in a potato salad.

Try a new root or tuber veggie.

Get Exotic, Go for Eggplant

March 23, 2006

Have you considered the exotic, deep-purple eggplant for your vegetable and fruit servings? Though used in many recipes as a meat substitute, eggplant has little protein.

But it's fiber-rich (especially with its edible peel), fat and cholesterol-free and low in calories – a half-cup of cooked eggplant has about 15 calories!

Kept chilled and cooked fresh, eggplant makes a mild (not bitter) dish.

Valued Customer

March 24, 2006

Shopping for value? Value isn't necessarily "super sized" or how much your food dollar buys. True value is the quality and health benefits that your food and drink choices impart.

For the best value for your food dollar:

- **Buy canned or dried beans.** Beans are an inexpensive protein food, loaded with fiber and other phytonutrients.
- **Fill your cart with veggies and fruit.** Fresh, canned or frozen—nutrition is virtually the same, so shop for the best price.
- **Grow herbs.** It's cheaper and more convenient than buying them.
- **Buy whole-grain foods.** They have more nutrients and fiber than their processed counterparts, for about the same cost.
- **Pack your lunch bag.** You'll save money and often have more nutrient-rich options than you might have with fast-food eating.
- **Stock your desk with bottled water.** It's cheaper than a vending machine soft drink.
- **Reach for single-serving flavored (perhaps low-fat) milk**—a nutrient-packed snack drink.

And consider this: Down the line, the cost benefits of healthful eating extend to cost savings in your lifelong, personal health care.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

Wrap It Up for Health

March 25, 2006

Want an easy hand-held meal? Just wrap and roll nourishing, flavorful ingredients in a tortilla or flat bread.

- Start with a sturdy, pliable wheat tortilla or flat bread. Try tomato, spinach or other flavored tortillas.
- Layer on well-dried greens: lettuce, spinach, watercress and other greens.
- Spread on cooked grains: bulgur, couscous, rice or tabouli.
- Flavor with salsa or salad dressing. Go easy so the filling won't be soggy.
- Add crunch veggies: diced bell peppers, onion, mushroom, sprouts, drained canned beans.
- Top with meat, chicken, or seafood (optional). Slice it first.
- Fold in the ends; roll!

Ordering out? Wraps aren't necessarily low-fat or low-calorie. A high-fat sauce or dressing, or a wrap that's twice what you need, may supply enough extra calories or fat for two meals.

Wrap leftovers or "plan-overs" for a quick lunch or supper.

Sweet Sweet Potatoes

March 26, 2006

Have a sweet tooth? Nibble a sweet potato!

Think about this. One-half cup of sweet potatoes delivers more beta-carotene (antioxidant) than 12 cups of broccoli. Sweet potatoes also supply vitamin E, another antioxidant, and potassium, too. Raw sweet potatoes make an easy low-calorie, nearly fat-free snack. They deliver fiber, even more than with the peel on. Sweet potatoes give a no-sugar-added sweetness to a meal, and cooking makes them sweeter yet.

Sometime this week, do this with sweet potatoes:

- Blend cooked and chilled sweet potatoes in breakfast smoothies. (Quick tip: Use canned sweet potato puree.)
- Cut them in strips for oven-baked fries.
- Substitute sweet potatoes for white potatoes or apples in recipes.

Make Room for Mushrooms

March 27, 2006

Shitake, crimini, portabella, enoki, oyster, morels, wood ears or white—whether tossed in a salad, arranged on a pizza or polenta, added to a stir-fry, or stirred into pasta, stew or soup, mushrooms add earthy flavors.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

Nutritionally, mushrooms are low in calories, cholesterol-free and essentially fat and sodium-free. They provide many B vitamins; potassium, which promotes heart health; selenium, an antioxidant that may be heart-healthy; and copper, a partner to iron in building red blood cells. Mushrooms may supply cancer-protective phytonutrients.

Tip: For best flavor, refrigerate them in paper bags or covered with paper towels; enjoy them at their peak freshness.

Passport to Health—Eating Italian Style

March 28, 2006

Bon appetite! Italian pasta, risotto and polenta not only deliver complex carbs. They're also perfect partners for a colorful array of veggies, fiber-rich legumes and small portions of meat, poultry and fish. The fat? Mostly heart-healthier monounsaturated olive oil.

For an Italian-style flavor today:

- Add fagioli (white beans) to minestrone soup or pasta sauce.
- Prepare Arborio (short-grain) rice with sautéed vegetables, cooked shrimp or grated cheese.

Child's Play

March 29, 2006

Have you played tag lately? Shot a few hoops? Jumped rope? Child's play makes great physical activity for grown-ups, too. Even more important, it's great family time and your chance to show that active living is healthful living at every age.

Actually, child's play teaches plenty! As kids climb, twist, jump, and run, their bodies get stronger, more coordinated and more flexible. They learn how to cooperate and share with playmates. Active play also can teach, develop the body-mind connection and build self-confidence.

Other benefits? Active kids may sleep better, learn a positive way to release stress and reduce their chance for overweight and type 2 diabetes. (Tip: Play along, and you'll get the same benefits; besides, it's a fun way to wind down your day.)

Fit child's play into your family's day.

- Enjoy a playground together. Equipment should be sturdy enough so you can swing, teeter-totter or slide, too.
- Play a pick-up game: basketball, softball or sidewalk tennis.
- Set aside play space where it's okay and safe to tumble, jump, run and kick a ball.

This tip was adapted from the American Dietetic Association.

Veggies for Dessert

March 30, 2006

With creativity you can fit veggies anywhere into any meal—even dessert!

Carrots, pumpkin and sweet potatoes, rich in beta-carotene, make great dessert ingredients; enjoy them in southern-style pudding. Corn and zucchini appear in sweet breads; tofu in cheesecake and frozen desserts; rhubarb in pie; even cucumber in a refreshing sorbet!

For vegetables in your dessert menu:

- Blend a pumpkin smoothie. Whirl canned pumpkin, fat-free milk, frozen vanilla yogurt, a dash of pumpkin pie spice or cinnamon in a blender.
- Use carrot juice as the liquid in baked goods. It won't taste like carrots!

Cook Savvy – Lean Ways to Cook

March 31, 2006

Trying to cook with less fat? Try these techniques:

- Braise or stew over low heat in liquid with a tight-fitting lid.
- Broil or grill with direct heat, often over hot coals.
- Microwave with no fat added.
- Roast uncovered in the oven, with dry heat.
- Simmer or poach slowly in liquid, just below boiling.
- Steam over, but not in boiling water.

For the record, frying, especially deep-fat frying, is high-fat cooking! If you're in a hurry, stir-fry at high heat in just a little fat, stirring often.